

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC029504
Inspection date	18 May 2010
Inspector	Mark Ryder
Type of Inspection	Key

Date of last inspection	9 February 2010
--------------------------------	-----------------

© Crown copyright 2010

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a home that provides medium- to long-term placements for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is registered to take up to four young people within the age range of eight to 17 years. The home is situated in a residential area and is close to bus routes and local amenities. The house is an older property and has a lounge, dining room, reception room, a resource room, toilet and an open-plan kitchen on the ground floor. All bedrooms are on the first floor and are single. The staff office is also situated on the first floor as well as the young people's bathroom. There is a garden to the front and rear as well as a patio area. Four young people are currently in placement and all contributed to this inspection.

Summary

This is a full inspection in which all key standards were assessed. The home has met all previous actions and recommendations. Equality and diversity is a strong aspect of this home ensuring young people are provided with a very high standard of personalised care. Health needs, consultation with young people and ensuring their safety are all areas of outstanding provision. The staff team provide excellent care to young people with significant behavioural and emotional challenges. There are good outcomes in promoting education, individual support and pathway planning. Two recommendations are made to further strengthen the good practice of this home. Monitoring of how the home operates provides rigorous critical evaluation. Young people are provided with a service that not only meets their needs but raises individual opportunities and development.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the home received one action and one recommendation to improve practice. Both of which have been met.

The home's recordings on sanctions now include the time in which the sanction was made. Fire drills are completed on a monthly basis. This includes at least one of the evacuations at night to ensure young people are protected in the event of an emergency situation.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The health and wellbeing of young people is ensured through excellent provision within this home. Staff involve the young people in choosing and preparing the meals that are served. Meal times are social occasions where staff and young people sit together to discuss the day. Culturally diverse meals provide young people with suitable and varied diets. For example, African Caribbean food is cooked regularly at the request of young people. Festivals are celebrated by cooking a meal that represents the specific country such as the Chinese new year. A young person wrote on their survey; 'If I choose something unhealthy I am advised to eat something else'.

The staff team ensure that the health needs of young people are constantly addressed. Registration with the local General Practitioner (GP), dentist and opticians is arranged shortly

after placements start. A nurse specialising in children in care provides on going support and guidance for the young people. This includes discussion regarding sexual health, alcohol use and the misuse of drugs. Young people have a choice whether the annual health assessment takes place at the surgery or the home, as well as the gender of the GP they wish to see. This means that young people are fully involved in the arrangements of their health care. Young people also have the opportunity to talk to the organisation's psychotherapist on a regular basis to provide additional emotional support. This is an area of particular strength within this home.

Staff safely administer medication through robust recording and auditing practices. All staff receive suitable training on general and specialist administration procedures. For example, providing medication for young people with epilepsy. Consent by persons with parental responsibility for staff to administer medication and basic first aid is kept on each young person's file. Young people, if they are competent to do so, are able to self-administer their own medication.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Young people are protected through excellent practice, sound policies and robust vetting procedures to ensure they remain safe at this home.

The staff team respect young people's personal space and are aware of issues around confidentiality. Records are kept safe and discussions between staff about young people are confined to the office or out of the way from other residents. Young people confirm that staff ask permission to enter their room. The impact on gender within the mixed group of young people in placement is clearly well considered. Practice demonstrates suitable attention to meeting individual gender needs, for example, ensuring female staff are available for girls in placement.

Complaints and minor 'grumbles' are very well managed. Young people are aware of the complaints procedure and have used it to good effect. It is written in an age-appropriate format which young people find easy to understand. Advocacy groups represent young people if they are required to do so. Young people say that staff show concern for them if they have worries about what is happening at the home and respond quickly. Young people feel listened to and their views respected. Recording of complaints are monitored on a regular basis.

Staff are suitably trained in identifying and reporting signs of abuse. Safeguarding is managed well with specific risk assessments in place to help staff be aware of how best to manage an incident. Policies and the Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures are available to inform and guide staff. Young people say they feel safe and that they can talk to anyone at the home about any concerns they have. Social workers are positive about how the home operates in terms of safeguarding young people.

Strategies to safeguard young people with regards to bullying behaviour promotes a positive culture within this home. Information for young people to understand bullying is available as well as contact numbers in order to seek further help. House meetings include bullying as a topic for discussion. Individual and general risk assessments focus on preventative strategies to reduce the potential for bullying. Particular attention is taken regarding any comments

concerning race and gender to challenge and educate young people to live together respectfully. A young person commented on a survey; 'nobody gets bullied at Rose Villa'.

Young people who put themselves at risk through being absent without consent are protected in accordance with the home's policy and procedures. The policy for staff regarding absconding behaviour provides clear guidance on ways to minimise the risks involved if a young person is missing. Records are very well recorded on all such incidents. These indicate the prompt actions by the staff to find the young person and notifying the police and other relevant agencies. Risk assessments provide further details on the level of vulnerability of young people. Absconding behaviour is raised with young people during key working sessions. This is an area of outstanding practice.

Relationships between staff and young people are respectful and friendly. Young people feel comfortable around a staff team that is experienced and trained in managing challenging behaviour. Evaluation of practice in addressing significant behavioural difficulties is a part of the team ethos. For example, staff reviewed the behaviour management strategies for one young person during team meetings and through consultation with a psychotherapist. This has had noticeable positive impact on helping the young person to address their aggressive behaviour.

Sanctions and the use of physical intervention is managed with young people's needs in mind and is consistent with the organisation's policies and procedures. Records reflect positive work to try and de-escalate behaviour although staff do not always record if a young person wishes to see a nurse or GP after being held as is their right. Young people believe that the rules are fair.

Health and safety measures are effective in ensuring young people, staff and visitors are protected effectively. Fire drills are held regularly and young people are aware of what to do. The home's fire risk assessment is updated annually. A recent fire inspection confirms the home is operating safely. Records of checks on the fire alarm, emergency lighting and door closures are completed on a weekly basis although this is not always recorded in the dedicated book. Hazardous substances such as cleaning materials are kept locked safety away from the young people and appropriately risk assessed. Annual maintenance of gas installations and portable appliances are tested within time limits. The home is suitably insured for public and employee liability.

The recruitment of workers provides suitably vetted and checked staff to safely work with vulnerable and challenging young people. Criminal Records Bureau checks, references and details on employment histories are collated and evaluated before staff start working at the home. New staff are provided with regular formal supervisions as part of their induction programme. Visitors to the home are also checked and supervised if required. All visitors are asked to sign in and out of the home as a part of the fire safety procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Education, individual support and a comprehensive range of suitable activities strongly promote the needs and aspirations of the young people living at this home.

Young people are able to follow their own religious beliefs and gain benefit from a staff team willing to support and guide them. For example, staff assist young people to attend places of worship such as a Sikh Temple. Young people also gain from emotional support provided by the organisations psychotherapist who visits regularly. Key working is an integral part of a placement for young people. These regular one to one sessions offer a range of guidance and information sharing opportunities for young people.

Educational provision both supports and guides young people to meet their individual potentials. Personal Education Plans refer to realistic targets that young people are fully involved in. There is a high expectation that all young people engage in education during placement. The home has strong links to local educational resources and projects which further facilitate the ethos of this home to promote education. A young person wrote on their survey; 'I get loads of help with education'.

Activities are planned to meet the interests of the young people. Financial support to engage in a range of activities enables young people to have very fulfilling opportunities to enjoy their interests. These include, football training, swimming, horse riding, golf and camping trips. Young people expressed positive views about what they can do and achieve at this home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Young people are able to contribute to the decisions affecting their futures and daily lives. All young people are able to express their own views and are listened to. Care planning is detailed and young people are actively encouraged to either read or discuss the plan. Young people are aware of why they are placed at this house and what they hope to achieve during their time living at this home. Care plans refer to religious and cultural needs of young people which are effectively carried out in practice.

Young people play an important role in the review of arrangements of their placements. Staff encourage all young people to participate in the meetings and contribute to the discussions about their future. Staff complete very well presented reports to such meetings giving accurate information that is shared with young people.

Contact between family and significant people in a young person's life is managed effectively. Staff ensure such relationships are positive and meet the needs of young people. There is close liaison between social workers and the home to discuss incidents relating to the young person's contact with family. Risk assessments provide further information to staff in working with young people and their families.

The culture of this home effectively and strongly promotes individual choice about each young person's placement. House meetings are a regular feature of the home and all young people attend and contribute to discussions. Similarly key working sessions provide young people with a forum to consider risk and consequences of unsafe behaviour. Staff are strong role models for young people at this home.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Young people prepare for adulthood with guidance from staff and through well developed pathway planning. Young people are at the centre of the decision-making process about their future when they are preparing for independent living. The organisation runs a course for young people approaching adulthood which further develops their skills. A young person said they are encouraged to cook and help with the cleaning as part of their development. Staff discuss future plans with young people and actively promote young people to make informed decisions about their lives.

The accommodation is in a good state of repair and reflects the culture and diversity of the young people living at the home. Young people take pride in choosing the decoration of their rooms. Bedrooms are very well personalised.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The home operates to a high standard of care and provides young people with the opportunities to reach their potential. The home consistently reflects on practice issues to ensure they are providing the very best for the young people in their care

The Statement of Purpose provides accurate information as to the home's functions and responsibilities. The young person's guide is written in a child-friendly style and personalised to each young person. The guide is very well written and young people feel they benefit from this when they first arrive at the home.

The quality of the staff team is one of the outstanding features of this home. Staff have significant experience and training to produce high quality childcare to very vulnerable young people. Most of the staff have completed the National Vocational Qualification in caring for children and young people to level three. The training and development of staff is strongly promoted. Staff are very positive about working at this home and clearly gain from the experience. Training exceeds the requirements of the national minimum standards.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Equality and diversity issues are embedded within all aspects of practice, care planning and daily recordings within this home. Young people are very well cared for and their individuality recognised and celebrated. The staff team composition reflects the diversity of the young people. Staff act as role models and advocates for young people who clearly benefit from such positive relationships. Young people enjoy being cared for by a team motivated to help them understand the pasts and prepare them for their future.

Excellent managed case files contain all necessary information to support each young person's placement. Young people are able to access their records at their request.

Monitoring of the home's practice and records demonstrates a robust approach to continuously develop this service. Equality and diversity issues are reflected upon and considered in all aspects of a young person's placement. An audit of how equality and diversity is implemented identifies further improvements to practice and recording. Critical appraisal of the service for young people is an integral part of the function of the home. The home currently meets and exceeds the national minimum standards in all areas of practice.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
----------	--------	----------

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that where there has been physical intervention, a record is made of when the child will have the right to be examined by a registered nurse or medical practitioner within 24 hours (NMS 22.13)
- ensure that a record is made of the regular testing of emergency lighting, fire alarms and fire fighting equipment. (NMS 26.8)